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HINTS
TO
COMPANY OFFICERS
ON THEIR
MILITARY DUTIES.

BY
CAPT. C. C. ANDREWS,
OF THE THIRD MINNESOTA REGIMENT,
U. S. VOLS.

For he, to-day, that sheds his blood with me,
Shall be my brother.—HENRY V.

————— The cry went once on thee,
And still it might; and yet it may again,
If thou wouldst not entomb thyself alive,
And ease thy reputation in thy tent;
Whose glorious deeds but in these fields of late
Made emulous missions 'mongst the gods themselves,
And drave great Mars to faction.—TROIL. AND CRES.

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N O T E.

THE principal portion of what appears in the following pages was written while the author was confined as a prisoner of war in the State of Georgia; and contains views which he has acquired in something more than a year's service, during the present war, in the Western army. They are submitted with more confidence, since he has found them to meet the approval of experienced and highly-educated military men.

The author owes sincere thanks to Col. Smalley, and other instructors in the Military Academy, for useful suggestions.

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HINTS

TO

CAPTAINS OF COMPANIES.

PRELIMINARY REMARKS.

THE discipline and efficiency of troops depend so much upon the zeal and capacity of commanders of companies, that their duties and responsibilities cannot be too well appreciated. If it is the part of superior officers to plan, those whose command is more immediate to the men are answerable for executing. Notwithstanding the following hints are addressed more particularly to Captains than to other officers, they apply also in a great degree to Lieutenants, who are often intrusted with the chief command of a company, and should stand ready to exercise it properly.

ARTICLE I.

BUSINESS CAPACITY AND RESPONSIBILITY.

A CAPTAIN ought to be a methodical and accurate *business man*. He receipts for all stores, and for every article drawn for the company ;—for those things which are issued to the men for their exclusive personal use, as well as for articles denominated company property, such as tents, arms, equipments, utensils, knapsacks, canteens, belts, and plates, for the safe keeping of which he is answerable to the Government. He is required to make quarterly reports as to the condition of this property ; to verify daily and monthly reports of the men in the company ; to keep an exact account of the value of the clothing issued to each man, as well as to take and furnish

to the Government vouchers for the clothing issued to each man: also to take care of the fund from company savings. There are many other duties of a similar nature which he must have attended to, but those mentioned are enough to show the need of systematic business habits; and he will find that prompt attention to these duties is absolutely necessary to secure him from additional and perplexing labor, as well as from pecuniary loss. If done day by day, they will be comparatively light; but if allowed to accumulate, they will be troublesome. Besides, an officer who neglects them is wanting in fidelity both to his Government and his company. The rules and forms in the Army Regulations must be his guide in these matters.

ARTICLE II.

MILITARY RESPONSIBILITY.

A CAPTAIN is *responsible* for the general efficiency and good behavior of his company. If it fails to be on hand in good condition when its services are needed, he of course is answerable. So, if neglect of duty or disobedience of the regulations should become general in his company, he would be liable at once to be dismissed from the service. He gains credit if his company does well; and it is right he should be dishonored if it does ill. Its efficiency and behavior reflect truly his capacity or incapacity.

ARTICLE III.

MILITARY KNOWLEDGE.

Study and Qualifications.—His qualifications imply much study. He must thoroughly comprehend all the principles and details of tactics. They must be, in fact, at his tongue's end ; for, in executing the manœuvres, as soon as the commander of the battalion has given the first or cautionary command, the captain must hasten before his company, and caution them what they will have to execute. On such occasions, it will not do for him to hesitate or falter a moment. To understand the tactics as he ought, he must apply himself as a close student ; for there is hardly a word that can safely be omitted. There is no escape from diligent study but in disgrace.

To be a bungler in company or battalion manœuvres forfeits confidence in his military capacity, and quickly establishes the opinion that he is holding a place he is unfit for. There is no profession in which incapacity is so severely criticized—and deservedly so—as the military. No officer, by his indolence or ignorance, has a right to endanger his men or the cause they fight for. And it is impossible for him to conceal his incapacity. A man, however, who has a taste for military affairs, by uniting theory with practice, will find the study interesting, and he will realize success proportionate to his toil.

A captain should be something of a *musician*. There are forty-eight bugle calls which he is required to know; and those used to signal skirmishers he is enjoined to be able to execute on the bugle himself.

Picket and Guard Service.—A knowledge of picket and guard service is indis-

pensable. This he can derive from McClellan's "Field Service for Cavalry." The officer who has given careful attention to this subject will feel that his industry is in a measure rewarded, when, after a lengthy march, and arriving in the night at a new place, he is suddenly called upon to post and instruct pickets, and feels competent to discharge the duty.

Nor is it enough that he understands this branch of service, and can instruct the men therein. He must enforce a strict observance of every duty devolving on the picket guard; and by no means allow the required vigilance to be relaxed. Days, weeks, months may possibly elapse without the enemy showing himself; but at length he comes, just when he is least expected. The neglect of a very few men, in such cases—as has been illustrated too often to our disadvantage in this war—may produce the most serious results, and

should be treated as one of the gravest offences.

Higher Branches.—So, he will need to study the higher branches of military science, especially strategy. He must learn the importance of position, and what positions are the best, both in attack and defence, for the different arms of the service; that if he has infantry against cavalry, he must, as a general rule, avoid smooth and open ground; that if a charge by cavalry is made upon infantry, the latter must reserve a part of its fire, to be ready for a second or third charge by a reserved force, since the first charge of cavalry is often to draw the fire of the infantry. He ought carefully to study Halleck's "Military Art and Science," Jomini's "Art of War," and "Maxims and Instructions on the Art of War."

Judging Distance.—He should also be able to judge of distance, on open ground,

even or rolling, smooth or rough, as well as in woods; so that he can readily determine the number of yards he is from the enemy, and know when it is prudent to fire. A useful and ingenious work on Judging Distance Drill has lately been published in England.

These remarks, of course, assume that a captain has not had the advantage of a regular military education. And although it will not appear practicable for a volunteer to pursue such a course, he ought nevertheless to obtain such a knowledge of engineering as will enable him to direct bridge building and fortifications. Some ability in drawing is also useful. Of course he will become familiar with the Army Regulations and Articles of War.

ARTICLE IV.

CHARACTER.

A CAPTAIN should be a man of *character*. He ought to be so worthy a man, and so complete an officer, as to gain the respect of his men, and, as far as possible, their admiration and love. Perfection in his duties will command respect ; and if he cultivates affection for his men, and tries to be deserving of their admiration, his sentiments will generally be reciprocated. He is a chief. His men are to follow him in the path of danger. There should be, therefore, a certain dignity in his character consistent with his office. The more he shapes his conduct according to the best heroic models, the more will he approximate to real greatness. Conduct light and frivolous,

or which is in the least dishonorable, will not only mortify his men, but deprive him of respect. It will of course weaken his authority. A company is always jealous of the character of their officers, and no weakness or indiscretion escapes their notice. The most intemperate man in the company will not excuse intemperance in his superior officers. This vice, so proverbially growing, and so disastrous in camp, should by all means be shunned, and radically shunned. He should be sober, patient, capable, and just. The toils of men are made lighter when they feel they obey one who is fit to command.

ARTICLE V.

FIDELITY IN DUTY.

Never Shirk.—Company officers should never shirk any duty. Whether it be to attend reveille roll-call, or his company drill, or in making the grand rounds after midnight, in bad weather, he should be exemplary in fidelity and punctuality. “The great art of commanding,” said General Napier, “is to take a fair share of the work. The man who leads an army cannot succeed unless his whole mind is thrown into his work. The more trouble, the more labor must be given; the more danger, the more pluck must be shown, till all is overpowered.” Zachary Taylor, when a colonel at a frontier post, in a time of profound peace, was always on hand at morning

roll-call. This was a characteristic of a true soldier. A similar strictness in duty during many years of monotonous camp service might almost have foretold the glory which finally crowned the life of Havelock. Gen. C. F. Smith, the hero of Fort Donelson, was distinguished for his exemplary attention to every duty. The same praiseworthy trait is preëminent in Gen. Sumner, who is reckoned among the most successful officers.

It is those who are faithful over a few or small things who are promised rule over many things. A conscientious officer will not neglect any duty which he is able to perform. Negligence, tardiness, and idleness are contagious. If officers set such examples, the men will follow them. On a march, an infantry captain should march afoot with his men; and all captains should camp with their men. Soldiers will, of course, perform their duties and undergo

necessary hardships more cheerfully, if they see their commanders readily undertake whatever devolves on them.

Napoleon says, in one of his maxims: "A general-in-chief should ask himself frequently in the day: 'What should I do if the enemy's army appeared now in my front, or on my right, or my left?' If he have any difficulty in answering these questions, his position is bad, and he should seek to remedy it." Now there are many questions which a captain should often ask himself respecting the condition of his men: "Have I omitted anything which, if performed, would make them more comfortable and efficient?" "Is there any neglect of mine which will cause them inconvenience?" "Is everything in as good order as it can be?" "Can we march in half an hour's notice?" "Have the men ammunition, so they could instantly turn out and give battle to the enemy?" These

and many similar questions he ought to be able to answer favorably.

Example.—It is said of Sir John Moore, who obtained that correct knowledge of his profession which is essential to the proper direction of the gallant spirit of the soldier, that he was enabled to establish a characteristic order and regularity of conduct, because the troops found in their leader a striking example of the discipline which he enforced in others. And his biographer adds: “Wherever fortune led him, while acting a subordinate part, he displayed at all moments and under all circumstances the most perfect self-command, and he succeeded, in consequence, in securing from the troops who served under him unlimited confidence and admiration.”

Constancy.—Officers and men who at first are enthusiastic in their profession, often abate their zeal and slacken their

painstaking, because they do not gain distinction and promotion as fast as they expected. They who fall into this error forfeit their title to distinction. The great dramatic philosopher puts into the mouth of one of his warriors this profound and solemn injunction :

“ Oh ! let not virtue seek
Remuneration for the thing it was.”

The soldier who allows his constancy of purpose to forsake him, who to-day takes off the harness, will lose the merit of the past. He is accounted for what he is at the present. But if he continues in well-doing, his honors will be all the greater when they come. The gallant Sir Ralph Abercrombie had passed through all the inferior gradations in his profession, and attained the sixty-second year of his age before circumstances enabled him to look an enemy in the face ; yet at a period when

most men are retiring from the bustle of active life, he exhibited all at once a thorough knowledge of his art, and rose to the rank of an able and active general of division. And his learned biographer justly says that "praise cannot be denied to him of having *executed well whatever he undertook*; and of a man who succeeds thus far, it is scarcely too much to conclude that if placed upon other and a wider field he would have succeeded there also."

This, indeed, is the key of success in all enterprises: to endeavor to discharge a duty in the best manner possible. If you are doing it for the hundredth time, you can do it so much the better. If you are complete and perfect in your present post, your superiors will rightly judge that you are capable of larger trusts. But if you grow dilatory, and get so far above your position as to slight its duties, the presumption is that you would be unreliable in a higher

office, after its newness had worn off.
“Keep honor bright.”

Napier thus describes Wellington as he appeared in the hour of the triumph of Salamanca: “I saw him late in the evening of that great day, when the advancing flashes of cannon and musketry, stretching as far as the eye could command, showed in the darkness how well the field was won: he was alone; the flush of victory was on his brow, and his eyes were eager and watchful, but his voice was calm and even gentle. More than the rival of Marlborough, since he had defeated greater warriors than Marlborough ever encountered, with a prescient pride *he seemed only to accept this glory as an earnest of greater things.*”

ARTICLE VI.

PRESERVATION OF HEALTH.

Health of the Men.—One of the first duties of a captain is to have a watchful care over the health of his men. Instead of allowing them to become less robust than when they entered the service, he should strive to increase their strength. In the first place, he will see that they receive their full share of the lawful rations, and that they are served without stint, yet without wastefulness. It is made his duty to visit and inspect the company kitchen daily; and this he should not fail to do, to see that everything is neat, and the cooking well done. If a meal be badly cooked, a mess, or likely the whole company must eat what is unwholesome or go without

anything. He should see that their tents or quarters are kept clean and well ventilated, and that they have as dry and comfortable a place for sleeping as circumstances will admit of. Their exercise should be regular, while not so violent and protracted as to wear by fatigue, yet sufficient to keep up the vigorous condition of the muscles. Outdoor games and gymnastic exercises should be encouraged. Great regard should also be had to those influences which contribute to cheerfulness and contentment of mind. Inasmuch also as sickness in early manhood is generally the result of negligence or intemperance of some kind, debility should be looked upon in some degree as discreditable. We read of no hero but would have disdained to be often reported on the sick list. "The dauntless spirit of resolution" which characterizes a hero, is not exhaled from a sour stomach. But when a man is really sick,

he should be treated with kind attention; and there is no better test of the affection which should exist between a captain and his men than the attention he shows them in such cases.

ARTICLE VII.

THE MORALE OF TROOPS.

By the *morale* of troops is understood their patriotism, valor, intelligence, and discipline. And it will be found that company commanders have it in their power to raise the standard of this virtue to a very high degree. "It is the *morale* of armies," says Jomini, "more than anything else, which makes victories and their results decisive." Attachment to their flag, a spirit of nationality, pride in their regiment, enthusiasm for their cause, and a consciousness of having performed a splendid march or heroic action, will contribute to their *morale*. "A rapid march," said Napoleon, "augments the *morale* of an army, and increases its means of victory. Press on!"

ARTICLE VIII.

EXERCISE OF AUTHORITY.

THE captain is required to exercise authority with strictness, yet with justice and kindness; and to secure prompt and faithful obedience. His commands should be plain and positive. He should be careful that they are within the scope of his proper authority—that they are uttered with spirit, but without passion. It is easier for him to transgress authority than for his men; but he has no more right to do so. He has no right to insult them by rude or profane language; nor to resort to such degrading punishments as tend to cast a reproach upon the corps.

ARTICLE IX.

DISCIPLINE.

Standard of Discipline.—His standard of discipline should conform to the rules and regulations for the government of the army; though the tendency is to fall far below that standard. There is some authority that is traditional or discretionary, and requires more care in its exercise than any other. It will not be safe to be exacting one week, and to relax discipline the next. A uniform system should be observed. Above all, he should be impartial, exercising power as the responsible agent of a superior authority. The Earl of Essex, in his order to the English army, enjoined his officers to govern by love, since those things which are undertaken

through fear and compulsion alone are but tardily and imperfectly performed. And certain it is, that those officers have always been the most successful who possessed the affection of their men.

Discipline Advantageous to all Parties.—It is an erroneous and dangerous opinion which some volunteer officers entertain, that the discipline which is thought to obtain in the regular army should not be introduced into the volunteer service. It is erroneous, because an army, whether of volunteers or regulars, should be in constant readiness for battle, when near the enemy. As Napoleon says (Maxim Seventh), it should “be ready every day, every night, and at all times of the day and night, to oppose all the resistance of which it is capable.” The tenderness which would indulge men in habitual disregard of established military rules, is but another name for injustice to the majority of the men

who attempt conscientiously to fulfil every duty. The negligence or rudeness of a few will undoubtedly increase the labors and disturb the rightful quiet of others. It is only where thorough discipline exists that the machinery of an army works in harmony, and that justice is done to all. This opinion is dangerous, because, if it is once permitted that rules may be disregarded, there will be no limit to such disregard, and misunderstanding and confusion will surely follow. "Without discipline and order," says Jomini, "no success is possible." And, further: "Experience has constantly proved, that a mere multitude of brave men, armed to the teeth, make neither a good army nor a national defence."

In one of the corps of the Army of the Potomac, a General commanding a division noticed, in reviewing an official correspondence, that the captain of a company of

sharpshooters claimed exemption for his company from obedience to general orders and army regulations concerning drills, &c., on the ground that "his command came into the service with the understanding that it was not to be held strictly to the rules of camp discipline." The General promptly issued an order censuring the conduct of the officer, which concluded with the following paragraph: "The only claim to especial consideration in this column, shall be excellence of conduct and discipline in camp, and excellence of behavior before the enemy; two qualities of soldiers which have in all history been found to go together."

Treatment of First Offence.—In noticing the first offence of a man, unless it be one peculiarly flagrant, it might be well to send for him, and in a friendly manner to point out the evil effect of his conduct, and to evince to him an interest in his welfare;

and, if he responds to such kind admonition in a penitent spirit, to let the offence pass without further notice. And, generally, it will be better to notice a first neglect by a private reprimand. This, if done in the right spirit, will gain the confidence and esteem of the soldier,—convincing him, as it can hardly fail to do, that it is more pleasant for you to preserve his credit than to exercise your power in punishing. It is princely to forgive. Magnanimity and generosity are shining virtues in one who rules ; whereas, a greedy and frequent use of power tends to bring it into contempt.

Punishments.—Above all, punishments should not result, nor even appear to result, from a spirit of resentment or revenge. If a captain is naturally quick and impulsive in temper, let him learn, day by day, to control it. This he can do. He ought to do it ; for one who cannot command himself should not command others. The nat-

ural temper of Wellington was extremely irritable, but his high sense of duty made him curb it, so that, to those around him, he seemed the most patient of men. The feelings and pride of a soldier are sometimes needlessly wounded by hasty expressions from his commander. Censure will fall with greater weight if it is not frequently expressed before the company. A good officer will not disdain to explain, at the proper time, the object, scope, and effect of orders; for moral means are the best in controlling the conduct of men, where they can be employed.

It is general in the service to punish men by imposing on them extra guard duty. This, in theory, certainly is wrong. Guard duty is the most honorable and responsible which the private soldier is required to perform. To use it as a punishment to a wrong-doer is conferring upon him credit rather than discredit; while at

the same time it degrades that kind of service in the eyes of other men. It is better to put a man on extra drill, or on some police duty about the camp.

And here it may be remarked that if a man, while undergoing punishment, imprisonment or otherwise, is allowed to go into action, it is not proper to impose the punishment to any further extent. Many hold that permitting a man under such circumstances to go on guard restores him to confidence.

Decision.—An officer should have great decision. In other words, he should possess firmness of purpose. He should fully deliberate and consider, with all the light and information he can bring to bear. The more rapidly he can conclude with correctness, the better officer he is. But after he has once determined, then he should no longer deliberate. Then firmness of purpose is a virtue; and it should

allow nothing to obstruct it. The great Marlborough was not a scientific man; but he was a man of firm purpose, and to that virtue is mainly to be ascribed his wonderful success. So a favorite maxim of Napoleon was: "The truest wisdom is a resolute determination." A halting, hesitating command propagates distrust and irresolution among the men.

Emulation.—The captain should seek to excite a spirit of emulation in duty by acknowledging and praising meritorious conduct. In many cases he can undoubtedly reward merit with great advantage. Let the neatest man, for instance, be exempted from a certain task.

Pride.—Both officers and men should feel a pride in their company and regiment. This will stimulate them to more painstaking labor in all respects. The misconduct of two or three thoughtless men may tarnish the reputation—perhaps perma-

nently disgrace an entire regiment. The private soldier should, therefore, feel the extent of his responsibility, seeing that he has the power of doing great good or mischief. The humblest soldier is in a great degree the guardian of the good repute of his company and regiment. So he should be impressed with the dignity and responsibility of his duties, and especially of guard service.

ARTICLE X.

RESPONSIBILITY OF SUBORDINATES.

FOR the faithful observance of certain rules of discipline, it will be well to hold non-commissioned (as well as subaltern commissioned) officers responsible. For example, that the chief of a squad, a sergeant, should be answerable for the cleanliness of their tent, that the lights are out at taps, that good order and quiet are preserved, and that the men turn out promptly at roll-call. On picket and camp guard, non-commissioned officers are required to enforce obedience, and it should be made a part of their general duty to exercise command.

Lieutenants.—In most campaigns the historian designates the officer next to the

commander-in-chief as *lieutenant*. He is an officer who is to take the place of the chief, whether it be of a company, regiment, or *corps*. The lieutenants of a company should seek, by their example in industry and zeal, to promote the efficiency of the company, and to co-operate heartily with their captain; to recognize the superiority of his authority; to render cheerful and prompt obedience to his orders; and to become as well prepared as possible to assume command of the company when it shall devolve upon either of them. If they possess the right military spirit and taste, they will prefer to earn the respect of the men by their military capacity, rather than court their favor by being simply a "good fellow." Any officer who seeks popularity at the expense of good discipline dishonors his commission.

ARTICLE XI.

INDULGENCE.

GRANTING indulgences is a discretionary power which should be exercised exclusively by the commander of the company. Men who ask to be excused from duty, or for leave of absence, or, indeed, any other indulgence, will of course have a reason for their request, and by such interviews the captain gains a knowledge of their conscience. Besides, it is the exercise of a delicate trust in the nature of patronage, requiring much prudence.

ARTICLE XII.

DIGNITY OF OBEDIENCE.

It was a true saying of Plato's that to know how to obey requires as generous a disposition and as rational an education as to know how to command. Prompt obedience of lawful orders is an evidence of cultivation. Instead of being servility, it is a merit. The captain himself should set the example of cheerful obedience to those above him in command, and inculcate an enlightened idea of this discipline in his company. He will endeavor to kindle within them a zeal for mental culture, and as far as possible to bring within their reach such reading matter as will inspire heroism. The valor, both of Alexander

and Philopœman, was encouraged by the Iliad. The more enlightened a man's mind is, the better soldier in every respect will he make.

ARTICLE XIII.

ECONOMY AMONG SOLDIERS.

It has been well said, that to youth the future is as remote as the Himalayas, and as certain as the Bank of England. A young man thinks he can go on spending his wages, and that the future, so far off and safe, will bring up all things even. This is a fatal mistake. The future day comes much sooner than it was expected, and finds the improvident dependent. A captain should instil into his men habits of economy, reminding them that if a man will not save something out of \$13 per month, he will not be likely to save anything out of \$100 per month. By thus benefiting them, he will also foster their

interest in the state, as well in respect to citizenship as the rights of property. The practice of living "fast" is discarded by the true gentleman.

ARTICLE XIV.

THOROUGHNESS IN INSTRUCTION.

OFFICERS and soldiers, whose hearts are in their business, will labor to become perfect in their duties. The commander of an army observes that a certain battalion is remarkably expert in the manual of arms, in marching, and in manœuvres. He rightly judges that its officers have been conscientious in their duty; that it is well disciplined and instructed. If there is a post of difficulty and honor—a forlorn hope to be led—it instantly occurs to him to employ that battalion in the arduous service. Because the men have been faithful so far, it is right to infer that they will be faithful in further and more honorable services. Indeed, his principal means of determining

the efficiency of his men is their appearance. Herein, then, will the private soldier perceive that his patient industry contributes to the honor of his regiment and State.

It is hardly necessary to say that a company should be instructed and practised so thoroughly in tactics as to be able to execute *all* the manœuvres without a blunder. Target firing should also be practised till the men are expert sharpshooters. Even the best marksmen may fail with a rifle with which they are unacquainted; and opportunity should be given the men to ascertain the range of their pieces before they are called into action. Too much attention, let it be repeated, cannot be paid to target firing. It is only by actual firing that men can learn to load and fire rapidly and with effect. In time of war especially, whatever is required to be done at all, is required to be well done. Hence, whether

the men are to turn out for roll call, guard mounting, drill, or dress parade, every man should be in his place promptly, and with animation. The captain will instruct them that the great thing in this matter is habit. If they become slow, negligent, or tardy in such duties, they will be behindhand when needed to form a line of battle against the enemy. In these, and similar instances, he will endeavor to create in their minds an idea of the true standard of duty, and cite examples showing the importance of activity and promptness.

ARTICLE XV.

PUNCTUALITY.

SOLDIERS should be minutemen. Punctuality is one of the most valuable habits a soldier can possess. "I owe all my success in life to having been always a quarter of an hour before my time," was the remark of Lord Nelson. Washington attributed so much importance to punctuality that when his secretary laid the blame for lateness of his attendance upon his watch, he said: "Then you must get another watch, or I another secretary." Blücher's promptitude gained for him the title of "Marshal Forward." Jervis, afterward Earl St. Vincent, was asked when he would be ready to join his ship, and replied, "Directly." And when Sir Colin Campbell,

appointed to the command of the Indian army, was asked when he could set out, his answer was, "To-morrow." So, it is well remarked by Napoleon, that "Every moment lost gives an opportunity for misfortune."

Soldiers who are imbued with the invincible spirit of a lofty valor will not willingly cause any one to *wait* for them. Sir Walter Scott has vividly pictured the obedient activity of valiant men—of men who are always good for more than double their number—in describing the swift assembling of the warriors of Rhoderick Dhu:

"*Instant* from copse and heath arose
Bonnets and spears and bended bows;
On right, on left, above, below,
Sprung up *at once* the lurking foe;
From shingles gray their lances start,
The bracken bush sends forth the dart,
The rushes and the willow wand
Are bristling into axe and brand,
And every tuft of broom gives life
To plaided warrior armed for strife.

That whistle garrisoned the glen
At once with full five hundred men;
As if the yawning hills to heaven
A subterranean host had given."

ARTICLE XVI.

TREATMENT OF THE MEN.

IN his private intercourse, the captain should be kind and affable toward his men. In some sense, he stands in *loco parentis* to them. They should be made to feel that he is glad to be visited by them. There should be free opportunity for the interchange of views and sympathies. His time is valuable, and he will not suffer men to loaf about his quarters; nor by any means will he have a few favorite hangers-on, because, while it is prejudicial to discipline, it deprives others of their share of interviews. But he should always be accessible to his men. It is not easy to give general rules on this point which will apply to all cases. Nor will it do for ordinary

men to imitate, in all respects, what has been done by great and intuitive judges of human nature ; such, for instance, as Cromwell, of whom it is said that “among his soldiers he was generally familiar and easy, seizing the men by their buttons, and, like Napoleon, indicating his good humor by a slight tap on the ear.”

The interest in his troops which Marlborough exhibited in his visits to the hospitals, his agreeable address and “manner of speaking to the meanest sentinel whenever he happened to cross his path, rendered him an object of equal love and respect to his followers.”

A curious anecdote is related of a brave officer whose name has already been mentioned—Sir Ralph Abercrombie. When mortally wounded at the battle of Aboukir, he was carried in a litter aboard the “Foudroyant,” and to ease his pain, a soldier’s blanket was placed under his head, from

which he experienced considerable relief. He asked what it was. "It's only a soldier's blanket," was the reply. "*Whose* blanket is it?" said he, half lifting himself up. "Only one of the men's." "I wish to know the name of the man whose blanket this is." "It is Duncan Roy's, of the 42d, Sir Ralph." "Then see that Duncan Roy gets his blanket this very night."

It is related of Wellington, that "no hospital or cantonment escaped his visits, nor did a letter or report remain unanswered." "Easy of access, the soldier's complaint was as attentively listened to as the remonstrance of the general."

ARTICLE XVII.

FORTITUDE.

INASMUCH as the superiority of an army over the enemy depends greatly upon its celerity of movement, men should be habituated to patience and fortitude in enduring long marches and undergoing necessary fatigues. They should aim to surpass the enemy in everything, and to make him purchase the slightest success at the dearest possible cost. Napoleon lays it down in one of his maxims, that "the first qualification of a soldier is fortitude under fatigue and privation." An intrepid and valiant spirit is the great help to fortitude. It is not only invincible before the enemy in the field, but serves to lift up and sustain the physical energies of the soldier. It

makes him more effective on the march, more vigilant, more energetic, and repels even disease itself. Remember the grandeur of your cause, and the sacredness of your responsibility, and you will bear yourself erect, patient, and hopeful, in the roughest path, and under the heaviest burdens.

ARTICLE XVIII.

VALOR.

THE captain himself should be imbued with a noble *valor*. If he cannot make up his mind to risk his life willingly and fearlessly at the very moment such a sacrifice is needed—in short, if he is unable to banish every lingering fear and dread of danger and death, the sooner he quits the service the better. No man has a right to be a soldier, least of all an officer, who is destitute of courage. Of the Lacedæmonians it was said :

“Nor life nor death they deemed the noble state,
But life that’s glorious, or a death that’s great.”

While a captain habituates himself to an indifference to danger, he should remember

that it is a sacred duty to be prudent both of his own life and the lives of his men. The country needs every man, and cannot afford that a life should be wasted. But when a movement which threatens certain death to himself and company is essential to turn favorably the scale of battle, then unfalteringly should he rush on to achieve the victory. He will labor to implant in the hearts of his men a resolute and invincible spirit of heroism. And as engagements are generally brought on with but little notice, it will not do to wait for an eve of battle before entering upon such a duty; but he must attend to it from time to time in the more quiet hours of camp life. He will remind his men how greatly their own State is interested in their bravery—that cowardice will not only disgrace them, but cast a dark shadow upon her name; whereas their valor will consecrate their own memories, and reflect lustre upon their State.

Again, that the heroism of every man contributes to the military fame of the common country, increasing everywhere the conception and dread of her prowess, and adding to the respect with which her flag is regarded in every clime and on every sea; that the more effective and terrible they are in battle, so much the more decisive and triumphant will be the war—so much the more speedily will it be closed—so much the more permanent and serene the peace which succeeds it. By citing the various instances where valor has gained an immortal renown, he will endeavor to inspire them with an ambition to rival, if not to surpass those examples, and so secure for themselves a deathless name. No one can contemplate the glorious courage with which Leonidas and the three hundred Spartans threw themselves upon the invading Persian hosts, without feeling in his own bosom some desire to court danger

in a great cause. Later examples of valor have raised the standard of excellence to which men are capable of attaining, and made it more incumbent on the patriot soldier to conquer or fill the grave of honor. Soldiers will surely become braver whose minds are familiar with historic exploits, and who remember the praise through all the future which the world accords to heroism.

Acquainted as he must necessarily be with his men, the captain best knows what they are capable of accomplishing. He knows whether or not they will fight valiantly. Hence, his determination to hold a position or encounter an equal or greater force must be based upon this knowledge; and if he is convinced that his men are equal to twice or thrice their number of ordinary troops, then he ought not to shrink from an engagement with such

superior numbers. Indeed, so much depends upon the discipline, ardor, and bravery of troops, that the enemy's number is often of but little moment.

ARTICLE XIX.

SUPERIORITY OF VALOR AND SKILL OVER NUMBERS.

MILITARY history abounds in instances where, on account of position and skill, a force has vanquished an enemy greatly its superior in numbers.

Timoleon, who delivered Cyprus from tyranny, with only 1,200 men, at Adranum, attacked and vanquished Icetes, who had 5,000 troops. Again, on the banks of the Crimesus, taking advantage of position, this active and determined general, with only 3,000 men, put to complete rout the Carthagenian army, numbering 70,000. Sertorius, in Lusitania, carried on successful warfare in the field with 6,600 men, against four Roman generals with an army

numbering 128,000. Cimon beat the Persians and drove them out of Greece with a force not one third so large as theirs. Hannibal gained his memorable victory at Cannæ with a force not half so large as the Romans, and killed upward of 40,000, while his own loss was less than 6,000. So it is well known that the triumph of Themistocles at Salamis was against very superior odds. In his great battle against Tigranes, Lucullus met an army consisting of 260,000 men. His own force was but a twentieth part so great, and so small in comparison, that Tigranes said, "if they came as ambassadors, there were too many of them; if as soldiers, too few." Yet over this mighty host, so vain and confident in their numbers, the valiant army of Lucullus gained an overwhelming victory, killing multitudes of them. So Marcus Lucullus, a brother of this warrior, when under Sylla, attacked an enemy more than thrice

his number, killed 18,000, and became complete master of the field. Sylla also gained many victories over vastly superior forces. The number of those he encountered at Orchomenus and at Chæronea are spoken of as “myriads;” but his disciplined and experienced troops carried terrible and widespread havoc into the ranks of the enemy. Marius, at Aquæ Sextiæ, with greatly inferior numbers, overcame the multitudinous army of the Teutones and Ambrones, killing and capturing above 100,000. So numerous was the army of his enemy that they occupied six days in marching, without intermission, by his camp. Again, on the plain of Vercellæ, with an army of 52,000, he cut to pieces the Cimbrian host, whose infantry formed a front extending thirty furlongs, with each flank of the same extent, and whose cavalry numbered 15,000. In the great battle of Leuctra, the Thebans had but 6,000

men. The Spartans had at least 18,000. The former, under command of Epaminondas, gained a complete victory over the Spartans, "and caused such a rout and slaughter as had never been known before." In this action Pelopidas evinced incredible bravery, "and though he had no share in the chief command, but was only captain of a small band, gained as much honor by the day's great success as Epaminondas." So at Pharsalas, Pelopidas with only 300 mounted men, routed a large force under Alexander of Pheræ. When informed that Alexander was advancing toward him with a great army, "So much the better," said he, "for we shall beat so many the more." So Shakspeare makes Henry V. utter a similar remark, in that stirring speech before the battle of Agincourt, which every captain should know by heart—where he says :

“ If we are mark'd to die, we are enough
To do our country loss ! and if to live,
The fewer men the greater share of honor.”

Cæsar, with a force of only 7,000, in one battle defeated and almost wholly destroyed the army of the Gauls, numbering 70,000. Napoleon gained his important victory at Marengo with a force of 28,000, over an enemy numbering 40,000. His still more decisive victory at Austerlitz was over an enemy superior in numbers. The force on his side, including the reserve of Desaix, numbered 70,000; that of the allies was not less than 90,000. The loss of the latter was 10,000 in killed and wounded, 20,000 prisoners, 185 guns, 400 caissons, and 45 standards.

The historic victory of Blenheim was achieved by Marlborough and Eugene over an enemy superior in numbers and stronger in position. The loss of their enemy in killed, wounded, and prisoners, was 36,000.

Nor let the incredulous or the timid fail to recognize the terrible power there is in a few brave hearts under a dauntless leader, when they remember how Clive, with 3,000 soldiers, in the battle of Plassey, vanquished and routed 70,000 men, supported by fifty pieces of cannon.

Wellington won the battle of Assaye with 1,500 British and 5,000 Sepoys, over 20,000 Mahratta infantry and 30,000 cavalry. In the famous siege of Delhi, the British army, numbering only 3,700, European and native, after repelling numerous attacks, finally defeated the rebel army, numbering 75,000 men, who had been trained by English officers to European discipline. In the battle of Corunna, the French, numbering 20,000, and numerous light artillery, under Soult, were driven from their position by the British, numbering 14,000, and only nine six-pounders; and the latter reached their ships in

safety, and sailed for England. So it is well remembered that General Scott gained the victory of Churubusco with 7,000 men, over an enemy five times as numerous. In the battle of Pea Ridge, Sigel with 800 infantry defeated 2,000 cavalry.

Examples of this kind should be a warning, to all who follow the profession of arms, of the high standard which history will employ in trying the conduct of those who contest the palm of valor.

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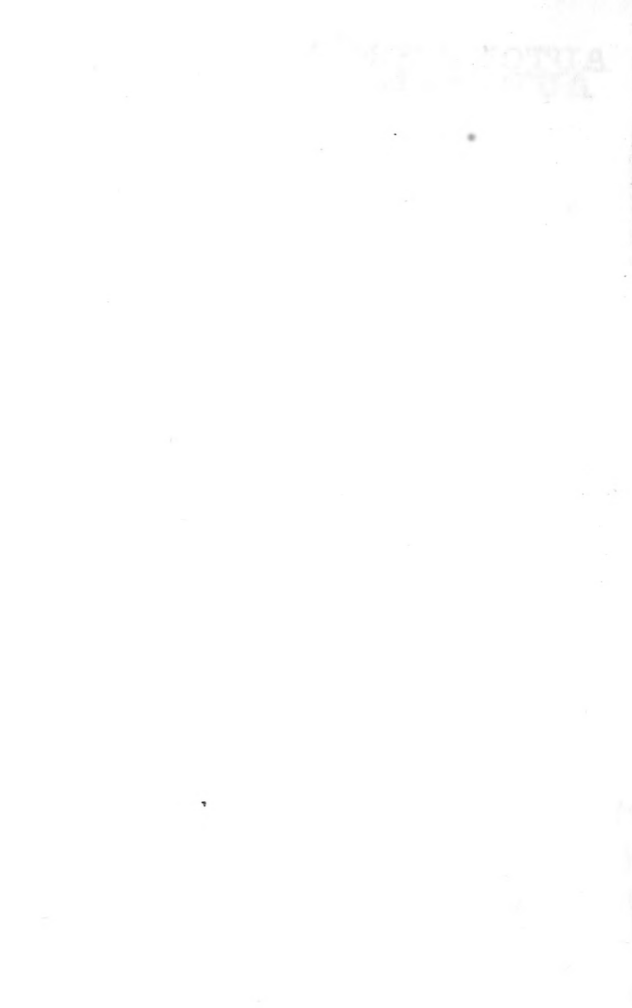
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